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Supporting Forests and Biodiversity

Quarterly Report

2nd Quarter – January 1 to March 31, 2013

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I. PROGRAM OVERVIEW/SUMMARY

Program Name:	Supporting Forests and Biodiversity
Activity Start Date And End Date:	November 16, 2012 to November 8, 2016
Name of Prime Implementing Partner:	Winrock International
[Contract/Agreement] Number:	AID-442-A-13-00002
Name of Subcontractors/Subawardees:	Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS); World Wildlife Fund (WWF); RECOFTC; East West Management Institute (EWMI)
Major Counterpart Organizations	Forestry Administration in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; Ministry of Environment
Geographic Coverage (cities and or countries)	Eastern Plains Landscape (Mondulkiri province) and Prey Lang Landscape (Kompong Thom, Preah Vihear, Stung Treng, and Kratie provinces)
Reporting Period:	January 1 – March 31, 2013

ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
CBPF	Community-based Production Forestry
CCB	Climate, Community and Biodiversity standard
CCF	Community Conservation Forest
CPA	Community Protected Area
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EPL	Eastern Plains Landscape
EWMI	East West Management Institute
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
HARVEST	Helping Address Rural Vulnerabilities and Ecosystem Stability
LEAF	Lowering Emissions in Asian Forests
MIST	Management Information SysTem
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NTFP	Non-timber Forest Products
ODC	Open Development Cambodia
PDD	Project Design Document
PLCN	Prey Lang Community Network
PLL	Prey Lang Landscape
PMEP	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Plan
RECOFTC	The Center for People and Forests
REDD+	Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forestry Degradation +
SFB	Supporting Forests and Biodiversity project
SPF	Seima ProtectionForest
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VCS	Verified Carbon Standard
WCS	Wildlife Conservation Society
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
SMART	Spatial Monitoring and Report Tool
ILO	International Labor Organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
GIZ	Gesellschaftfür Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Society for International Cooperation)
CPC	Country Program Coordinator
CFPC	Community Forestry Partnership Coordinator
AAO	Administration and Accounting Officer
TC	Training Coordinator

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I.I Program Description/Introduction¹

The Supporting Forests and Biodiversity (SFB) project is implemented in collaboration with the Forestry Administration in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Ministry of Environment through a consortium of project partners, which include Winrock International, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC), and the East West Management Institute (EWMI). Project activities will be concentrated in Mondulkiri province in the Eastern Plains Landscape (EPL), which is part of the lower Mekong dry forest and the largest intact block of forest in Southeast Asia, and in and around the Prey Lang Landscape (PLL) in the provinces of Kompong Thom, Preah Vihear, Steung Treng, and Kratie.

Cambodia has one of the highest percentages of forest cover in the region and the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has adopted a Millennium Development Goal to maintain 60 percent forest cover. The RGC also has a target of placing two million hectares under community forestry management. The goal of the SFB project is to improve conservation and governance of two of the most important forest landscapes in the country, the Eastern Plains and Prey Lang landscapes to mitigate climate change and conserve biodiversity. The participation of communities and other stakeholders in forest management decisions will be improved under the project and capacity-building of communities and officials of sub-national authorities will cut across all project elements through three inter-linked objectives through which the project's primary goal will be accomplished.

- 1) Enhance the effectiveness of government and other natural resource managers at national and sub-national levels to sustainably manage forests and conserve biodiversity.
- 2) Improve constructive dialogue on forest management and economic development at the national and sub-national levels.
- 3) Increase equitable benefits from the sustainable management of forests.

¹ USAID Comment (May 29, 2013): Consider an Executive Summary for future reports as these get longer. SFB Response: Executive Summary added to quarterly report format from Q3 onwards.

I.2 Summary of Results to Date²

The results presented in the following two tables are indicative of project accomplishments during the past quarter, but it should be recognized that the basis of the reporting in this quarterly report is an initial set of indicators that is currently under discussion with USAID. On review and approval of an agreed set of indicators and PMEP, those indicators will form the basis of reporting in the next quarterly report. The sources of project contributions to the current set of indicators are summarized in the second of these two tables.

Standard Indicators	Baseline FY YYYY	Annual Target	Q1 FY12	Q2 FY12	Q3 FY12	Q4 FY12	Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%)	On Target Y/N
G.2: Number of hectares of biological significance and/or natural resources under improved natural resource management as a result of USG assistance		50,000		35,000			30%	Y
G.4: Number of stakeholders with increased capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate variability and change as a result of USG assistance		5,000		about 1,500			30%	Y
G.5: Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation		5,000		about 1,500			30%	Y
G.6: Number of institutions with improved capacity to address climate change issues as a result of USG assistance		7		2			29%	Y

² USAID Comment (May 29, 2013): Table format is confusing. SFB Response: Summary of Results to Date table reformatted for Q3 report.

Standard Indicators	Baseline FY YYYY	Annual Target	Q1 FY12	Q2 FY12	Q3 FY12	Q4 FY12	Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%)	On Target Y/N
G.7: Number of laws, policies, strategies, plans, agreements, or regulations addressing climate change (mitigation or adaptation) and/or biodiversity conservation officially proposed, adopted, or implemented as a result of USG assistance		10		3			30%	Y
G.9: Number of people receiving USG-supported training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation.		1,000		342			34%	Y
1.1.1: Number of persons and person hours of training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation supported by USG assistance		2,000		684			34%	Y
1.3.1: Number of stakeholders actively engaged in improved forestry management practices		5,000		about 1,500			30%	Y
1.3.2: Number of stakeholders in targeted landscapes that exhibit understanding of major conservation, forestry and climate practices		5,000		about 1,850			37%	Y
2.2.1: Percentage of individuals from targeted populations showing increased knowledge on forest and resource management issues and REDD+.		10%		~35%				

Standard Indicators	Baseline FY YYYY	Annual Target	Q1 FY12	Q2 FY12	Q3 FY12	Q4 FY12	Annual Performance Achieved to the End of Reporting Period (%)	On Target Y/N
2.2.2: Number of stakeholders using climate information in their decision making.		1,000		about 1,500			150%	Y
3.2.1 Number of model actions, methodologies, protocols, tools and technologies developed and adopted by partners and stakeholders		5		1 (methodology developed, not yet adopted)			20%	Y
3.3.2 Number of people with improved livelihoods from alternative income generating activities		3,000		350 participating in initial activities (livelihoods not yet improved)			12%	Y

I.3 Detailed Summary of Results to Date

Standard Indicators	Q2 Achievements FY12 (January-March 2013)
G.2: Number of hectares of biological significance and/or natural resources under improved natural resource management as a result of USG assistance	4,000 ha - indigenous land titling 6,000 ha - community patrolling of forests 25,000 ha - community forests ³
G.4: Number of stakeholders with increased capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate variability and change as a result of USG assistance	1,500 people involved with securing access to natural resources and reducing vulnerability as a result of land security
G.5: Number of people with increased economic benefits derived from sustainable natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation	1,500 people (same as above) have better access to natural resources and land as a result of land security
G.6: Number of institutions with improved capacity to address climate change issues as a result of USG assistance	2 community-based organizations supported to address climate vulnerability in local communities
G.7: Number of laws, policies, strategies, plans, agreements, or regulations addressing climate change (mitigation or adaptation) and/or biodiversity conservation officially proposed, adopted, or implemented as a result of USG assistance	3 land titles issued ⁴
G.9: Number of people receiving USG-supported training in natural resources management and/or biodiversity conservation.	166 people (30 females) received awareness raising on land law, forestry law and laws related to natural resources management 12 people involved in training on community-based patrolling activity 133 People (16 females) involved in training and support to community-based production forestry
1.1.1: Number of person hours of training in natural resources management and/or	186 people (35 females) trained on doing forest inventory, preparing management plans, and management zoning of community forests and

³ USAID Comment (May 29, 2013): Add in detail on where these HA are located in future reports. SFB Response: Q3 report includes footnotes with details on the location of HA listed.

⁴ USAID Comment (May 29, 2014): I am not sure if number of land titles issued is related to the indicator? It should be law, policy, regulation, agreement, etc that evolve number of stages. SFB Response: CF/CPA/CBPF/ICT agreements CAN be counted under BOTH 1.1.1 AND 1.4.1/2.4.1.

biodiversity conservation supported by USG assistance to national-level actors	developing internal rules and regulations for community forests; 498 person/hours received training and mentoring on laws related to natural resources management.
1.3.1: Number of stakeholders actively engaged in improved forestry management practices.	1,500 as at G.4 (Number of stakeholders with increased capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate variability and change)
1.3.2: Number of stakeholders in targeted landscapes that exhibit understanding of major conservation, forestry and climate practices	1,850 as at G.4 (Number of stakeholders with increased capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate variability and change) and at 3.3.2 ⁵ (Number of people with improved livelihoods from alternative income generating activities)
2.2.1: Percentage of individuals from targeted populations showing increased knowledge on forest and resource management issues and REDD+.	35% (but without a baseline, this is difficult to demonstrate, but this is the project team's estimate based on the FPIC efforts in and around the Seima Protection Forest) ⁶
2.2.2: Number of stakeholders using climate information in their decision making.	1,500 as at G.4 (Number of stakeholders with increased capacity to adapt to the impacts of climate variability and change)
3.2.1 Number of model actions, methodologies, protocols, tools and technologies developed and adopted by partners and stakeholders	Cambodian Rural Development Team, a project partner of WCS, has developed a methodology of working in indigenous villages. ⁷
3.3.2 Number of people with improved livelihoods from alternative income generating activities	These include people supported to improve agriculture in six villages, in collaboration with WCS project partner CRDT; 180 people initially identified as beneficiaries of honey enterprise expansion in additional two villages and 90 people initially identified for future livelihood intervention ⁸

2. ACTIVITY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRESS

2.1 Progress Narrative Summary

In and around the Seima Protection Forest in the EPL

⁵ USAID Comment (May 29, 2013): If the three indicators are always the same, then perhaps we will need only one indicator to report on. SFB Response: Indicators restructured for Quarter 3 report.

⁶ USAID Comment (May 29, 2013): Proper baseline is required as soon as start of the project. SFB Response: This indicator was removed from the PMEP before Quarter 3 reporting.

⁷ USAID Comment (May 29, 2013): If the methodology has not been adopted yet, perhaps it should not be reported. SFB Response: Note indicating methodology developed but not yet adopted added to table above.

⁸ USAID Comment (May 29, 2013): These activities tend to be improving livelihoods but have not yet. SFB Response: Note indicating this added to summary table above.

The most important result during the past quarter from the Seima Protection Forest (SPF) was the completion of the Project Design Document (PDD) for the SPF Core Area REDD+ pilot activity. The preparation of a detailed PDD is required to ensure accreditation by the *Verified Carbon Standard* (VCS) and the standards of the *Climate Community and Biodiversity Alliance* (CCB). The document is currently under review by the Forestry Administration and subsequent to its approval will be opened to public comment and the project officially audited against the standards to ensure compliance. The initiative is currently on track to receive its first carbon credits next year. SFB will support the establishment of two of the most critical elements which will be associated with the anticipated receipt of those credits, the project benefit-sharing and financial fund management arrangements.

A second important accomplishment in the SPF during the reporting period was the 864 km of transects which were surveyed as part of the 2013 Biodiversity Monitoring program. The sampling, which is on track, is expected to be completed in May, with the results of the surveys available soon after that to inform forest management decisions.

Significant progress also continued to be made during the past quarter in regard to the initial testing of the Community-based Production Forestry pilot activity. The most detailed forest inventory ever conducted in Cambodia was completed and the first trial harvest is expected to be organized in the next quarter. SFB will plan to support the extension of this activity if the trial demonstrates its financial sustainability.

In and around the EPL

Several project activities were initiated in the EPL during the past quarter. Important achievements included the selection of the villages where SFB will be implemented. Five were identified as priority villages for establishing community forests.

Discussions in regard to the organization of a national level consultation workshop related to ecosystem mapping which will be undertaken in June in partnership with Stanford University were ongoing during the past quarter. Several activities, including the engagement of local communities in government development planning processes, which are dependent on the Government's schedule, are expected to start in July 2013 after the national elections.

Important achievements during the past quarter also included the identification of target villages in which to provide livelihood support and the strengthening of previously established livelihood initiatives in the EPL, especially those associated with ecotourism, non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and timber value chains. Twelve villages from eight communes were selected for SFB livelihood interventions this year in the EPL.

The operation of honey enterprises in two expansion areas started during the past quarter subsequent to training provided by the project team on sustainable honey harvesting, quality monitoring, and financial management. Start-up capital of \$2,000 through the SFB was provided to one of the groups, which is expected to provide benefits to 90 people, 60 of whom are women.

In and around the PLL

Project activities in the PLL are in the early stages of development and during the past quarter were concentrated on the scoping and mapping of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other stakeholders in and around the PLL.⁹

2.2 Implementation Status

Objective 1. Effectiveness of government and key natural resources managers at national and sub-national levels to sustainably manage forests and conserve biodiversity enhanced.

Sub-objective (Intermediate Result) 1.1 – National level capacity to support the sustainable management of forests, biodiversity conservation, REDD+, and low-emissions development strengthened.

Seima Protection Forest (SPF) in the EPL

- The Project Design Document (PDD) for the SPF Core Area REDD+ pilot was validated.

The project design document was completed and submitted, as planned, to the Forestry Administration for approval. There was a briefing prepared for senior members of the Forestry Administration, which was chaired by Chea Sam Ang (Deputy Director-General). The briefing concentrated on the completion of the PDD and the tentative timetable for achieving its validation, in collaboration with the Forestry Administration, through the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS). This would allow the exchange of carbon credits in the voluntary market sometime next year. A period of public comment, wide-ranging local consultations, and an in-depth validation audit of the PDD by an accredited and independent auditor, are planned for the next quarter. The SFB project will support these activities, as well as the establishment of two of the most critical elements associated with the anticipated receipt of the credits, the project benefit-sharing and financial fund management arrangements.

- Social and environmental standards safeguards and implementation process was agreed.

The PDD for the Seima Protected Forest Core Area REDD+ project has extensive social and environmental safeguards in compliance with Climate, Community and Biodiversity (CCB) voluntary standards. This will further ensure that important safeguards, such as Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), the means to raise and solve grievances, equitable community representation, and provisions for long-term sustainability are considered, not just in the REDD+ pilot, but also more broadly in project implementation in the EPL and the PLL. SFB will support various efforts to extend the applications of the social and environmental standards and provide training and organize exchange visits for government officials and other stakeholders to support the developments of the standards at every level.

⁹ USAID Comment (May 29, 2013): Please give an estimated time of completion. SFB Response: The initial scoping was largely completed during this quarter. However, work remained on consolidating information, and combining and reconciling information with what RECOFTC collected. It was completed during Q3.

Sub-objective (Intermediate Result) 1.2 – Sub-national Administration and sub-national line ministry capacity to effectively meet evolving responsibilities in forest management sector increased.

In and around the Seima Protected Forest in the EPL

Training on MIST (Management Information SysTem), which is used to track the effectiveness of law enforcement management activities, continued during the quarter. MIST is a law enforcement monitoring database that stores data received from enforcement teams and allows managers to analyze the effectiveness of interventions and track emerging threats. A revised and improved data management system, SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Report Tool), which has been developed by a range of partners, will be implemented next quarter. Some training on the SMART conservation software has commenced and several of the project team are now proficient in its implementation.

Innovative methods for the collection of data and forest monitoring continue to be tested, such as unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) for use in monitoring land-use change within the SPF. These methods will complement the extensive data library the project team has collected on the SPF, including ground-based and satellite analyses of biodiversity, land-uses and deforestation.

- Biodiversity data updates to inform site management planning made available

Considerable effort was extended during the past quarter to the collection of data for the biodiversity monitoring program in the SPF. Subsequent to the completion of the design and the protocols in the previous quarter, project teams initiated biodiversity assessments in the area's northern transects. The transect schedule has been planned to ensure that difficult and more inaccessible transects are completed prior to the arrival of the wet season when roads commonly become impassable. The four field teams enter the forest for six days to complete the 32 km required for each of the 40 transects. The teams record every biodiversity sighting using a *distance sampling* protocol, which is considered to be the best practice method for biodiversity surveying.

Twenty seven transects have been completed thus far and 864 km have been surveyed this season. This is equivalent to 216 km surveyed per person. Results have been promising, with the design proving to be feasible, key species sighted, and the skills and experience of the teams increasing. The monitoring teams have been able to contribute several reports of illegal activities to the law enforcement teams to enter into the MIST database, as well. This integration of activities of the teams informs law enforcement strategies and strengthens forest management. The plan provides for teams to complete the remaining 13 transects, a further 416 km, by mid-May.

The Mondulkiri Protected Forest in the EPL

The Terms of Reference for the development of the management plan for the Mondulkiri Protected Forest, which has an area of more than 350,000 hectares (363,177 ha), were submitted during the quarter to the Forestry Administration through Dr Keo Omaliss, Director of the Department of Wildlife and Biodiversity, for comment and subsequent approval.

Discussions were initiated with Mr. Sy Ramony, Director of Wildlife Sanctuaries in the General Department of Administration for Nature Conservation and Protection of the Ministry of Environment, of plans, to develop the management plan for the Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary.

In and around the PLL

The project team reviewed the ‘Capacity Building Needs Assessment’ of Community Forestry and Community Protected Areas that was previously conducted by RECOFTC at the national level, as well as sub-national level in Kampong Thom, as a reference for organizing a parallel assessment for stakeholders in the PLL. The assessment will evaluate the current understanding of line ministries at national and sub-national levels, NGOs, commune councils, and community forestry management committees and members of various competency standards associated with sustainable forest resources management. The results of that assessment will provide the basis for the development of effective training programs designed to strengthen the management capacities of those groups.

The scoping and mapping of 49 community forests with a cumulative forest area of 88,722 hectares, with each community forest at a different stage of development in the eleven-step process of establishing community forests, was completed. The results revealed that there currently are:

- 20 community forests in Kampong Thom, 13 of which have signed agreements.
- 16 community forests in Preah Vihear, 8 of which have signed agreements.
- 6 community forests in Kratie, 1 of which has a signed agreement.
- 7 community forests in Stung Treng, 2 of which have signed agreements.

The formalization and submission of 9 more community forestry areas, 7 in Kampong Thom and 2 in Preah Vihear, to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries for approval is planned during the next quarter.

The project team conferred with various organizations with programs in the PLL, including the University of Copenhagen in regard to ecological studies and carbon assessments and Conservation International in regard to REDD+ project development, to provide the backdrop for harmonizing the development and conduct of appropriate awareness raising and training events which will be organized through the SFB, including suitable “community based forest resources management options.”

During the quarter, project partner, RECOFTC, facilitated the USAID mission on Community-based Natural Resources Management Assessment with its accompanying Case Study of the Kbal O’Kra Nhak community forest in Kampong Thom province and participated in the Joint USAID Regional and Cambodia Project Coordination Meeting, with representation from the SFB, HARVEST, LEAF, LEAP, and Green Mekong programs. RECOFTC also briefed the USAID/Cambodia Environment and Winrock project teams on its activities in Cambodia, as well as on community development plans in the PLL.

Sub-objective (Intermediate Result) 1.3 – Local level technical skills for forest management and biodiversity conservation to support community-based natural resources management (CBNRM) improved.

In and around the Seima Protected Forest in the EPL

- Training courses and programs for conservation areas, including Community Forests, Protected Forests, Community-based Production Forestry, Community Conservation Forests, Community Protected Areas and Indigenous Community Land Title areas, were developed and delivered by the project team

A number of training courses were prepared and delivered by the project team to local communities and sub-national government staff involved with management of the Seima Protection Forest (see the following table).

<i>People</i>	<i>(Women)</i>	<i>Days of training</i>	<i>Training course content</i>
24	3	2	Pre-harvest forest inventory training
34	1	2	Working with forest inventory information
37	12	2	Developing community understanding of Community-based production forestry (CBPD)
38	11	2	Developing financial management for community groups for CBPF
166	30	1	Awareness raising on the land law, forestry law and laws related to natural resources management
31	3	2	Forest land use monitoring
12		2	Training in community patrolling activities
28		4	Forest Ranger training
3		5	SMART TOT training
3		2	UAV initial TOT training
4	1	1	Ecotourism strategic development
380	61	25	Totals

Support was also provided through the Forestry Administration and local communities to strengthen monitoring efforts to resist land-grabbing by outsiders living on the boundaries of Economic Land Concessions. Satellite analysis had indicated that at least 400 hectares had been illegally cleared in the SPF during the past quarter.

In and around the Mondulkiri Protected Forest in the EPL

Five priority villages where community forests are to be established in the Mondulkiri Protected Forest were identified by the project team and initial consultations and capacity building processes were started in two of those villages in consultation with the Protected Area Manager. Management planning in two of the six existing Community Conservation Forests (CCFs) is at an early stage of development and there is a lack of clear government guidelines on the process for developing management plans for CCFs. The Forestry Administration initiated a consultation process in 2011 to review existing guidelines for developing management plans to address concerns over the complex process involved and, as a result, revised and simpler guidelines were developed. Official approval of those guidelines is still pending, however, and the guidelines have not yet been introduced into provincial offices. The resulting situation will provide various opportunities to deliver specialized training through the project to government officials and NGOs once the guidelines have been approved. Meanwhile, preparation of community natural resource management plans in two of the CCFs is ongoing.

In and around the Phnom Prich Wildlife Sanctuary in the EPL

Preparation of community natural resource management plans continued during the reporting period. Forest inventories were completed in three Community Protection Areas (CPAs), Srae thom, Pou houg, and Sraey, with a combined area of 7,690 ha and the draft of a management plan, incorporating participatory resource assessments, the division of the area into management zones, and the forest inventory, was completed in one of those (Srae thom). The next step in the process will be to define management objectives and strategies, or management prescriptions.

Objective 2. Constructive dialogue on forest management and economic development at the national and sub-national levels improved.

Sub-objective (Intermediate Result) 2.1 – Effective stakeholder participation in national and sub-national planning processes affecting forest land management and economic development increased.

In and around the Seima Protected Forest in the EPL

- Increased community participation was experienced in annual planning for the Seima Protected Forest and the implementation of the Core Area REDD+ pilot activity.

The concluding agreement between 20 indigenous villages in the Seima Protected Forest, the Forestry Administration and the provincial government was signed on 14 January 2013. The agreement was the result of 18 months of consultations between the villages, their representatives, and the Forestry Administration, that were facilitated by various groups, including the project team and the Community Legal Education Center and supported by both national and international lawyers. The Free, Prior and Informed Consent process engaged 2,624 families, or approximately 13,000 people, in a lengthy process of awareness-raising, participation, consultation and, ultimately, seeking local people's consent for REDD. A total of 2,217 (83%) of

the families provided their consent and 42% of signatories were women. SFB will provide critical support to the REDD+ activities through the process of receiving the anticipated carbon credits.

The Seima Protected Forest Core Area REDD+ pilot activity has strived to ensure that the activity incorporates relevant best-practices standards and equitable participation by local communities. The Free, Prior and Informed Consent process, in combination with other community involvement reported last quarter, has led to increased community engagement in the activity. Further plans for community participation under SFB are to strengthen the actions of every village in the Core Area of the SPF, especially in regard to participation in the annual planning process during the next quarter.

In and around the EPL

- Reconstitution of the Provincial Conservation Planning Unit (PCPU) in the EPL

Initial discussions occurred during the quarter between project partners and staff of the PCPU, which was previously instituted under the ADB Biodiversity Conservation Corridors project. The discussions were in regard to the reconstitution of the PCPU planning unit in Mondulkiri province. Project partners plan to be in leading positions to determine roles, responsibilities and the contributions that the PCPU might be able to make to provincial-level planning and the mainstreaming of conservation into ongoing planning activities. These actions represent initial efforts to institutionalize processes and procedures that encourage more widespread participation of stakeholders in natural resources management decision-making processes.

In and around the PLL

- Complementary scoping activities were completed by two of the project partners, RECOFTC and EWMI

The scoping study of civil society organizations mapped more than 30 of those organizations in the PLL. The study provides profiles of each of those organizations, as well as relevant information on the communes and districts proposed by the Forestry Administration and the area's 13 Forestry Administration Triages and 4 Cantonments. Information compiled through the scoping study is available, as well, on various local NGOs. There is also a series of maps that indicates where the Prey Lang Network is active in relation to economic land concessions, registered community forests, the government proposed protected area, and the water catchment landscape. The study's results are planned to be used to inform both internal discussions conducted in collaboration with USAID and to define appropriate strategies to support effective interactions with civil society organizations in the PLL.

The complimentary scoping effort included assessments of those stakeholders primarily involved in the implementation of community forestry-related activities in the periphery of the proposed Prey Lang Protected Forest. It includes coverage of those districts, communes, villages, Forestry Administration Divisions and Triages, and community forestry communities located immediately adjacent to the most recent proposed boundaries of the Prey Lang Protected Forest defined in the draft sub-decree. The scoping covered multiple stakeholders in each of the four provinces of the PLL, including line government agencies in 4 Forestry Administration Cantonments, 6 Divisions, and 13 Triages; local authorities in 4 provinces, 9 districts, 25 communes, and 70

villages; 32 NGOs and community forestry communities. The primary purposes of the scoping were to: (a) determine those stakeholders to engage in constructive dialogues and consultations; and (b) provide a representative reference for the development of appropriate platforms for facilitating such interchanges.

Sub-objective (Intermediate Result) 2.2 – Stakeholder understanding of forest land management, REDD+, biodiversity conservation, CBNRM, and relevant economic development planning issues strengthened.

In and around the PLL

The project team, through its Grassroots Networking and Constituency Specialist, initiated discussions with Advanced Engineering, the Cambodian civil engineering firm that produced USAID's 'Rapid Socio-Economic and Hydrological Assessment of Prey Lang' under the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises project, to develop an updated overview directed more to the general public of the technical aspects of the report, particularly with respect to the significance of Prey Lang's watersheds.

Discussions were also initiated in Vietnam with Can Tho University regarding the potential engagement of technical experts from the university to assist in the production of land-use change maps for Open Development Cambodia (ODC). Such engagement would not only attempt to involve Vietnamese researchers in assessments of downstream impacts in Vietnam of upstream land use changes in Prey Lang, but also would increase the capacity of the ODC's Cambodian mappers.

Project support continued throughout the quarter for Open Development Cambodia and the strengthening of its public access information website. During the reporting period, ODC strengthened its technical capabilities with the installation of a geo-server, which is an open-source software server that will allow users to share and edit geospatial information, as well as extend ODC's map display capabilities to encompass the use of regularly updated land-sat images, and an online library. Topographical and land-sat layers were also prepared for use on the site. The topographical maps include place names in Khmer and are expected to be especially useful for community groups, who will be able to orient development projects in relation to recognizable land features on the maps. This is considered to be an important early step in translating the site into Khmer. During the quarter, the ODC uploaded 663 news article summaries, 111 new videos, and 27 new or revised maps to the website.

There was support provided through the project for several Prey Lang Community Network activities during the quarter, as well. That support extended to participation in two national-level dialogues on Prey Lang, a press conference to present recommendations related to the establishment and management of the proposed Prey Lang Protected Forest, two discussions on Radio Free Asia, which were subsequently echoed in a two-part series broadcast on National Public Radio that established some linkages between China's demands for raw materials and their potential impacts on natural resources in Cambodia, and a joint strategic planning meeting with Friends of the Forest. Project support was also available for the organization of a Prey Lang

Community Network General Assembly meeting, at which discussions emphasized the importance of increasing participation in local governance planning processes, especially commune council meetings. Those discussions were enriched by the participation of 10 commune councilors in the assembly who advised on effective means of engaging with commune councils. It was reported at the Assembly that there were five villages added to the Prey Lang Community Network during the quarter, bringing the total to 83 of the 118 villages in the 11 communes in which the Prey Lang Community Network is currently active. Project support was also provided for the organization of a Prey Lang Ceremony by the Prey Lang Community Network, at which some 400 people participated to promote the importance of the forest and highlight and reinforce the culture of Prey Lang's indigenous peoples.

Fourteen members, including four women, of the Prey Lang Community Network participated in an NGO Forum-organized review of Economic Land Concessions and mining concessions in Prey Lang, at which they discussed the more than 20 Economic Land Concessions in or near Prey Lang and the 13 mining operations that have been established around the forest.

Sub-objective (Intermediate Result) 2.3 – Dialogue skills of relevant stakeholders (community, government, and private sector) improved to engage with one another on forest and resource issues.

In and around the EPL and the PLL

- Training and capacity building on conflict mediation and negotiation was organized in the EPL and in the PLL during the reporting period.

Some limited, but well-targeted training and mentoring in facilitation and community mediation skills was provided by the project team during the quarter. The activities primarily targeted indigenous project partner staff, many of whom are in a rather unique position to support the rights of other indigenous people.

Throughout the quarter, the project team encouraged Prey Lang Community Network members and affiliates to reflect on their messages whenever speaking about the Prey Lang forest. The members were regularly reminded of the importance of positive public positioning and the use of a constructive, collaborative voice in expressing views on management of the forest.

Open Development Cambodia (ODC) made several presentations during the quarter, including presentation of a series of maps related to the recently announced iron/steel/rail project commencing in Rovieng, Preah Vihear. Those maps, available from government sources, were also published on the ODC website. Two other presentations were also provided on the site during Prey Lang Community Network consultations with university students and farmer and fisher groups. Those, which were viewed by more than 200 people, focused on the means to use the site to inform analysis and discussion of development. ODC also participated in the US embassy-organized 'Tech Camp,' where a series of presentations were organized to introduce participants to the site.¹⁰

¹⁰ USAID Comment (May 29, 2013): To be clear, this is SFB funding this and not USAID's Program on Rights and Justice (PRAJ). How does EWMI differentiate between the two projects? SFB Response:

The project team proposed the inclusion of the status of the establishment of the Prey Lang Protected Forest into the agenda of the 35th Meeting of the Technical Working Group on Forestry Reform. The ensuing discussion of its status indicated that: (i) The Forestry Administration had proposed the establishment of the protected forest in 2011. Initially, 600,000 ha of forest had been included within its proposed boundaries, but subsequent to consultations with provincial governors, local authorities and local communities, that area had been reduced to 400,000 ha and the area's actual extent will only be confirmed after the current process of allocating land to local communities has been completed; (ii) The Forestry Administration is currently attempting to combat illegal logging and forest clearings and is organizing quarterly reconnaissance flights, as well as conducting forest inventories, in the area; (iii) The next steps in the process are to finalize boundaries with provincial governors, submit the final draft sub-decree to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Council of Ministers, and develop a management plan for the area; (iv) The Forestry Administration has requested that its development partners, as well as NGOs, consult with the Forestry Administration to ensure harmonization of work plans in the area; and (v) It was confirmed that there may be no subsequent consultations on the draft sub-decree, although it may be shared to some extent with stakeholders prior to submitting it to the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Council of Ministers for approval.

SFB was represented by several project partners at a REDD+ discussion which was organized by the UNDP at the Forestry Administration. The discussion included updates on the UN-REDD program and development to support REDD+. Participants at the meeting included representatives of various NGOs, the UN-REDD+ Taskforce, UNDP, and JICA-REDD+.

Objective 3. Equitable economic benefits from the sustainable management of forests increased

Sub-objective (Intermediate Result) 3.3 – Community participation in income-generating activities broadened, with a special focus on under-represented groups

In and around the Seima Protected Forest (SPF) in the EPL

- A series of capacity building activities on enterprise development and management were completed.

Of the training courses which were provided during the past quarter, the one which generated more than usual interest was the one on Community-based Production Forestry. The training was provided to 38 people, including 11 women, resulting in about 1,300 person-hours of training and mentoring. SFB plans to support the extension of the activity into other community forests if the testing demonstrates the potential of its long-term financial sustainability.

- Value chain analyses of timber and non-timber forest products (NTFPs) continued during the quarter.

During the first quarter of 2013, EWMI's work in support of ODC was funded under both SFB and PRAJ II. Support for ODC under SFB was limited to a portion of Terry Parnell's time.

Previous value chain analyses of timber conducted in the SPF by project partners provided an important source of inputs into the planning process associated with the Community-Based Production Forestry timber harvesting pilot during the quarter. A value chain analysis of ecotourism was also initiated during the reporting period to inform ecotourism strategy development in the SPF.

- Enterprises benefiting local communities were implemented.

Notable progress was made with respect to the development of the Community-based Production Forestry pilot activity during the quarter. Of particular significance was the production of a detailed pre-harvest forest inventory. This entailed a substantial effort on the part of the project team to intensively sample a 60 ha block of forest over a two-month period. Detailed inventory information is now available for all of the mature trees in the area, as well as for a large sample of smaller trees. Moreover, although the inventory was concentrated in a relatively small area, it is considered to be the most detailed forest inventory ever performed in Cambodia.

A training course in production forestry was also completed, with clear roles and responsibilities of community participants defined and a plan for the management of the trial harvest developed. A planned assessment of the training was commenced to address potential information gaps, as well as other findings of the assessment. The timber harvesting plans, in English and in Khmer, were submitted together with the forest inventory information to the Forestry Administration for pre-harvest approval. Final preparations are currently underway for the trial harvest and once permission has been received from the Forestry Administration, the harvest is expected to occur prior to the start of the wet season.

Efforts to develop an ecotourism strategy in the SPF commenced during the quarter. The basis of the strategy, which will be developed in collaboration with the Forestry Administration, will be contributions from several activities that were initiated during the quarter, including those associated with market research, model development, competitor analysis, and other approaches to ensure that proposed ecotourism will benefit local people and provide support for sustainable forest management.

- Seima Protected Forest Core Area REDD+ pilot benefit-sharing and fund management models were developed.

Models were developed during the quarter to address the issues of equitable benefit-sharing and fund-management of REDD+ revenues. Supporting documents to outline those issues were presented to the Forestry Administration. The PDD also contains significant details on those issues and is now under assessment by the Forestry Administration.

In and around the Mondulkiri Protected Forest in the EPL

Two honey enterprises with a combined membership of 26 were established in Romanea and Soksam communes. Initial training was provided to 12 of the group's honey collectors, including 3 women, in the Romanea commune on the sustainable harvesting and handling of honey and its quality control and inventory management. Start-up capital of \$2,000 is planned to be provided through the project to each of these groups to purchase materials and obtain seed capital for

purchasing honey from among its members. The honey will be sold to a contracted purchaser in Phnom Penh through the Mondulkiri Wild Honey Network, which anticipates selling about 3,000 kg of honey through the remainder of this year. Similar training for the honey harvesters in Soksan commune will be organized next quarter.

Discussions to establish a provincial packaging center for the Mondulkiri Wild Honey Network are ongoing. This is a provincial level network of honey collectors in Mondulkiri which was organized through one of the project partners, WWF, in 2009. The network is responsible for consolidating the products of its members and establishing purchasing agreements with companies in Phnom Penh and Sen Monorom, the capital of Mondulkiri province. It is also responsible for packaging honey using the local brand, Mondulkiri Wild Honey, which is sold to shops in Sen Monorom. Currently, packaging is accomplished at the village level, but problems with facilities and utilities, including hygienic rooms, water, and electricity for sealing bottled honey, restrict the potential profitability and financial sustainability of the enterprise. This has led to an assessment of the feasibility of establishing a packaging center through the project in the provincial capital as part of the expansion, or scaling up, of the enterprises. This activity would complement the plan to pilot the export of the Mondulkiri honey to Japan next year on the basis of the identification of an interested purchaser from Japan.

In support of these plans, the project team met with business service providers, as well as an independent consultant and a representative from NatureWild, which is a business service provider for NTFP-based enterprises in Cambodia, to initiate a feasibility study and develop a business plan for the operation of a Mondulkiri provincial honey packaging/processing center, as well as a product development plan for resin.

In and around the EPL

A proposed exchange visit in May 2013, which would allow selected members of the Prey Lang Community Network to visit the EPL to observe enterprise development activities involving ecotourism, timber, and NTFPs, is currently under discussion between project partners WWF, WCS, and EWTI. The visit would represent the initial step in a plan to evaluate opportunities for introducing similar livelihood activities into the PLL.

There is an active effort to involve women in the enterprise development activities, including initiatives to work with other women's groups which have been established through other programs in the EPL. Research on adding value to and exploring markets of livelihood products involving women is also continuing. This is exemplified by the active engagement of women in activities which are exploring the use of resin by-products remaining after the essential oils have been filtered and removed. This initiative, in collaboration with the NGO, NatureWild, which provides business services to community enterprises, is assessing potential markets for these products, which include natural varnish, sanding sealer and boat caulking materials.

2.3 Implementation challenges.

In and around the Seima Protection Forest in the EPL

The Community-based Production Forestry pilot which is to be tested in the buffer zone of the Seima Protection Forest will be the first such activity in mainland Southeast Asia. The

implementation of the pre-harvesting and harvesting plans of the pilot, as a result, have presented several challenges, including the training of community members in various aspects of production forestry that have not previously been encountered by community forestry organizations in the country. The pilot activities, if the demonstrations reveal that those activities will be financially sustainable over the long term, will provide an effective roadmap to follow for other community forestry organizations.

The impending wet season is exerting additional pressure on timelines and the rains have arrived earlier than anticipated, as well. This will make access and fieldwork more challenging, although those conditions have largely been incorporated into project planning.

Prime Ministerial Degree 001 on Land Titling has increased pressure on land in recent months. The potential to have land officially registered is a significant issue affecting local communities, in regard both to the possible titling of Indigenous Community Land, as well as a driver of deforestation prior to land measurements. Land in Protected Forests should not officially be titled, but some land was measured during the recent land measurement initiatives and the actual implementation of the regulation is unclear. The project team is currently providing technical advice to support the implementation of the Land Law to address this challenge.

In and around the PLL

- The Government announced an MoU with Chinese companies to initiate an integrated iron-mining, steel production, and rail project emanating from Rovieng in Preah Vihear province. This large, multi-faceted project has the potential to have various impacts on communities, not just in Rovieng, but all along the rail line, which will cross through Kampong Thom, Kampong Chhnang, Kampong Speu, and Koh Kong. The planned development underscores the importance of the project's efforts to encourage public dialogue on the positive and negative impacts of development projects, particularly in regard to Prey Lang and its buffer zone communities.
- The scoping study of civil society organizations was more time-consuming than expected due to the larger number of civil society organizations in Prey Lang. The project team was, thus, unable to arrange meetings with a small number of those groups and relied instead on public information and understanding from previous observations and interactions to compile profiles of those groups. The scoping also uncovered some issues that will require further discussion, including the clarification of the PLL civil society working area outside of the proposed area of the protected forest. The area recommended by RECOFTC is significantly larger than the area in which the Prey Lang Community Network is currently active, including within those larger boundaries some areas which are perhaps more relevant to the Boeung Pe landscape to the west.
- Prey Lang Community Network representatives reported illegal logging by economic land concessionaires, particularly Vietnam's C.R.C.K. and Korea's Think Biotech.
- Unexpected technical problems hindered the launch of the Open Development Cambodia geo-server and online library. Solutions involved upgrading hardware and server services. ODC now has its own dedicated online server. While the geo-server went live on the last day of the quarter, technical problems with uploading the library to the new server were still unresolved.

- Police monitoring of the Prey Lang Ceremony and General Assembly, which was intended to be a closed members' meeting, was off-putting, at best, and intimidating, at worst, to participants, many of whom were photographed without permission by police. Such official actions do not encourage open dialogue.
- Prey Lang Community Network documentation and reporting has long been an area of concern since those skills are central to demonstrating the capacity of this low-literate group to assume a co-management role. Documentation continues to remain inconsistent and incomplete.
- There is a general lack of trust among various stakeholders in the PLL. This poses a challenge in regard to encouraging constructive dialogue and engaging stakeholders in decisions affecting development of the PLL.
- The official proclamation of the Prey Lang Protected Forest by the Government might be delayed as the result of the effort to complete the RGC's current land titling program and the forthcoming national election which will affect, among other matters, the implementation of planned stakeholders' constructive dialogues and other related activities in the PLL¹¹.

2.4 PMEP Update

The PMEP and indicators are currently under discussion with USAID.

3. INTEGRATION OF CROSSCUTTING ISSUES AND USAID FORWARD PRIORITIES

3.1 Gender Equality and Female Empowerment

The participation of women in project-related activities is relatively high and there are now several positions within communities and government in the EPL which include women. Such participation is reflected in the 42% share of women among the signatories of the Free Prior and Informed Consent agreement provided by local communities in regard to expressing their approval of Seima Protection Forest REDD+ activities in the EPL. The affirmative action practices outlined in the project's first-year work plan, particularly in regard to the hiring of female and indigenous staff, are also encouraged in both the EPL and the PLL.

In Prey Lang, the project team encourages women's participation and leadership in the Prey Lang Community Network (PLCN). Of the eight PLCN facilitators who participated in the two national consultations which were organized during the past quarter, two were women, while one other woman made three media appearances. Moreover, although family obligations and social mores make it difficult for women members to participate in activities outside of their local communities,

¹¹ SFB is planning to assist FA to conduct a biodiversity survey in PLL. It is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2014. The project also will work with FA to conduct consultation with PLL stakeholder to move the protection forest process.

increasing women's participation in PLCN meetings and related activities, where participation tends to be between 20%-35%, is a priority objective of the project team.

The preliminary scoping and mapping of community forests in the periphery of the PLL during the quarter has revealed that of 28,050 community forestry members in 49 community forests, 2,505 (8%) are women, while of 291 officers of community forestry management committees, 84 (28%) are women.

In the EPL, gender issues are consistently considered during the process of identifying and subsequently developing livelihood options in local communities. In order to increase awareness among project staff, a training program, as well as a workshop to develop guidelines and principles to improve women's participation in the project, is planned.

3.2 Sustainability Mechanisms

At a strategic planning meeting organized during the past quarter, the PLCN core group and other participants, with direction from the project's grassroots networking constituency team, discussed their long-term vision of roles in the co-management of the proposed Prey Lang Protected Forest and its forest resources, as well as the internal capacities which would be required to support that a vision, which would include the enhancement of the PLCN structure, the improvement of documentation, and expanded outreach to communities not yet associated with the network.

The sustainability of proposed community forestry and related activities which are planned and will be implemented under the SFB project in the PLL is underscored by consistency with existing policies, laws, regulations and programs of the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC), including (i) the Forestry Law (2002); (ii) Community Forestry Sub-decree (2003); (iii) Rectangular Strategy (2004/2008); (iv) MAFF Prakas on Community Forestry Guidelines; and (v) the Community Forestry Program under the National Forest Program (2010-2029).

3.3 Environmental Compliance

The planned project activities that will be implemented in Cambodia are in compliance with US Federal Regulation 22 CFR 216.

3.4 Global Climate Change

The Seima Protection Forest Core Area REDD+ pilot is fundamentally concerned with climate change mitigation in that its purpose is to sequester carbon. The estimates of carbon sequestration are provided in the Project Design Document.

Previous results from assessments of climate vulnerability in local communities in the Seima Protection Forest collected by project partners are currently providing the basis for the development of climate adaptation strategies which will protect those communities against potential impacts of global climate change.

Considerations of climate change adaptation and mitigation are incorporated into the community forestry management plans developed by project partners.

3.5 Policy and Governance Support

With technical assistance from the project grassroots networking constituency team, the Prey Lang Community Network and Friends of the Forest organized national-level civil society consultations during the last quarter on the draft sub-decree for a Prey Lang Protected Forest in anticipation of Government-led consultations.

3.6 Local Capacity Development

The project grassroots networking constituency team provided technical advisory support for PLCN activities during the past quarter which extended to two national-level civil society consultations on the draft sub-decree for a Prey Lang Protected Forest, the Prey Lang Ceremony, and a PLCN General Assembly. The understanding that PLCN and Friends of the Forest organized those activities, as well as arranged prerequisite logistics, on their own initiative reflects the steady development of their organizational capabilities.

The project team also provided advisory support for the PLCN core group meeting and a PLCN-Friends of the Forest strategic planning meeting at which 35 members initiated discussion of strategy, which emphasizes collaboration with the Government, the means to start to demonstrate co-management capacities, and methods of coordinating with PLCN members in and around the forest, as well as the establishment of connections with other networks and downstream farmers and fishers.

Technical consultants under the project, including library, mapping, and library specialists, continued to work side-by-side with Open Development Cambodia team members during the past quarter to guide developments and strengthen members' skills. Technical experts from Can Tho University in Vietnam also volunteered activities to advise and guide the development of land-use change maps, derived from land-sat images.

The basis of the capacity building strategy of the project team is a "training for action" approach in which training courses are developed to respond to the results of "training needs assessments." A training of trainers is followed by field training of community forestry management committees, community forestry members, commune councils, and other local and sub-national stakeholders. The skills obtained from the trainings are subsequently applied in the implementation of planned field activities to strengthen capacity development.

3.7 Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Global Development Alliance (GDA) Impacts

The project team interacts with various private sector organizations that represent potential investors in the ongoing NTFP supply chains associated especially with honey and resin. While this engagement was initiated prior to its start, the project will provide various means to further strengthen interactions with private sector organizations in the process of developing Public Private Partnerships. It is still somewhat premature to be able to report on detailed progress, but

the establishment of such partnerships will be a priority consideration, especially in the EPL, with the project team over the succeeding two quarters.

3.8 Science, Technology, and Innovation Impacts

The use of dedicated databases, such as those of Monitoring Information SysTem and Spatial Monitoring And Reporting Tool in the Seima Protect Forest, allow the collection of scientific information on important management issues and its integration from disparate sources to support sustainable resource management decisions.

Other technological innovations, including Unmanned Aerial Vehicles, or drones, are also now being trialed in the Seima Protection Forest to improve forest monitoring and management. This technology is expected to significantly improve the ability to monitor land-use changes at high resolution and in near real-time. A presentation was made by the project team at the Association for Tropical Biodiversity and Conservation annual meeting, which summarized those innovations to an international scientific audience.

The Open Development Cambodia's development of a geo-server allows regularly updated land-sat images to be used as base maps against which impacts of development are assessed. ODC's collaboration with Can Tho University in Vietnam is expected to advance this development one step further by assisting ODC in its efforts to display land-use change maps which can be animated to illustrate the loss of forest over time. Can Tho University's guidance will increase the capacity of ODC staff and its volunteer mappers.

4. STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT

There is a broad range of stakeholders involved in project activities associated with the Seima Protection Forest, including the Forestry Administration in the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, which is the manager of the project sites. There are also various other stakeholders at the national level, including the Ministry of Interior, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and the national agencies responsible for Provincial Departments, including the Ministries of Rural Development; Land Management, Urban Planning and Construction; Environment; Tourism; and Culture and Fine Arts. The four district authorities and six commune councils, which are the authorities responsible for communities in and around the SPF, collaborate closely with the project.

Local NGOs involved in the area include the Cambodian Rural Development Team, Development Partnership in Action, My Village, The Sam Veasna Center, Nomad, the Cambodian Legal Education Center, and World Education. International agencies and NGOs with which the project team has ongoing engagement in the SPF include GIZ, ILO, UN REDD, Norad, and the ADB.

There have been several meetings to ensure that the activities planned to be implemented under the project are well-coordinated with the activities of other stakeholders. The Indigenous Community Land Titling efforts of the GIZ, in particular, have been coordinated with the parallel

efforts of the project to avoid overlaps, as have the planned activities at the provincial level of the ADB Biodiversity Conservation Corridors project.

The project team has previously established strong relationships with Government organizations, local NGOs, and communities in the Eastern Plains Landscape. The selection of local communities to participate in project activities, which is based on livelihood linkages to the Mondulkiri Protected Forest and requirements for livelihood diversification, is prioritized in those areas in which threats to the forest, on which those communities rely, are the greatest. In succeeding quarters, the project team plans to encourage greater engagement with the private sector, particularly with economic land concessionaires and private mining interests.

The project has also established relationships with universities and currently collaborates with the Imperial College, London; the University of Singapore; and the Royal University of Phnom Penh (RUPP). Initial discussions have been organized between the project team and RUPP to identifying capacity building and training opportunities for students and associates of the RUPP Biodiversity Conservation Masters degree program.

5. MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

Important progress has been made by one of the project partners, WCS, with regard to project staffing. Key staff have been either recruited or mobilized during the past quarter, including Dr Alex Diment, Senior Technical Advisor for WCS in Mondulkiri; Khang Soeung, Ecotourism and Indigenous Communities Officer; Keziah Hobson, Ecotourism Advisor, who will concentrate efforts to develop an ecotourism strategy and plan its implementation; Noun Veasna: Administrative Officer in the Seima Protection Forest, who will ensure compliance with USAID rules and regulations at field sites; and Matthew Nuttall, Monitoring Advisor, who will coordinate with the biodiversity teams to ensure that data is collected and analyzed to international standards. There were two additional positions which were contracted during the past quarter, as well, and the persons selected to fill those positions will commence their responsibilities with the project next quarter. This will include the project Program Leader for Objective 1.

Important progress was made by WCS on SFB staffing, with many SFB project personnel starting during this quarter. In addition, WCS has also supported a review of the structure and staffing of the Forestry Administration teams who work at the SPF. This will result in an Indigenous Communities Coordinator joining the Forestry Administration team to provide oversight to the project's activities with local communities.

WCS is also currently providing technical inputs into the renovation and operation of the Forestry Administration Headquarters at Keo Seima to ensure a safe and suitable working environment. These improvements will complement well the new building that is under construction with funding from the Japanese Embassy in efforts to provide a physical infrastructure which will be conducive to long-term forest management.

SFB activities primarily focused on the finalization of the annual work plan, finalizing terms of reference and recruitment of staff.

EWMI also made significant advances in staffing during the past quarter. A recruitment and selection process was undertaken for the position of a Prey Lang Grassroots Networking and Constituency Coordinator and the successful candidate will be selected and contracted next quarter. It was also a priority during the past quarter to increase ODC's staffing. Design Team Leader, Heng Huy Eng, who had previously been a contractor for Open Development Cambodia, became a regular employee. A Research & Volunteer Coordinator, as well as two new coders, were also contracted to start their assignments at the start of the next quarter. Interviews for another two editor positions were also completed. ODC expected to offer one regular and one intern position to successful candidates during the first week of the next quarter. The search for a librarian was unsuccessful, with none of the candidates demonstrating the required skills, and at the end of the quarter, ODC began "head-hunting" for a librarian with the assistance of library consultant, Margaret Bywater. The ODC Advisory Group met twice during the quarter, drafting by-laws and discussing nominations for an ODC governance board in advance of making application to the Ministry of Interior to be registered as a local NGO.

The project technical support team at RECOFTC (i.e., Country Program Coordinator, Community Forestry Partnership Coordinator, Administration and Accounting Officer and Training Coordinator, including the senior training officer) is in place. The recruitment of three project field positions, including a provincial Community Forest Partnership Coordinator, provincial Community Forest Partnership Officer, and a Training Officer, are currently in progress.

6. LESSONS LEARNED

In the EPL, ecotourism pilot activities commenced last year, with some initial success. Specialist bird-watching tourists, as well as more general tourists, now visit the area regularly to provide support to community development through the distribution of the direct benefits from forest conservation. The community structure of the tourism remains unclear, however, and there are a number of challenges related to its ownership. The intensity of threats to the forest, moreover, has limited the access of ecotourism. The project team is now supporting the Forestry Administration in its efforts to develop an ecotourism strategy for the Seima Protection Forest, in which these issues and the lesson learned, which is that community ownership and engagement is essential in the development of successful ecotourism enterprises, will be incorporated.

The Prey Lang Community Network-organized 'Prey Lang Ceremony' was a testament to the increasing development capacity of the network. The entire event was planned and largely resourced by the network and their partner, Friends of the Forest. The ceremony drew on cultural traditions, reinforcing indigenous and forest communities' connection to Prey Lang. The important lesson learned is the importance of including cultural and social elements in the PLCN's activities. The fact that participants were also able to engage positively with the police sent to monitor them is evidence of how they have internalized the values of peaceful engagement and active non-violence.

Involvement and engagement of multi-stakeholders in project activities takes time and evolves gradually as their understanding and capacity improves anchored on a strong "*mutual trust and confidence*" to engage and collaborate.

In order to clarify and agree roles and responsibilities and working relations among partners a proper project inception should be conducted among consortium partners before proceeding to project implementation.

7. PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR NEXT QUARTER INCLUDING UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENTS CALENDAR				
April – June 2013				
Start Date	End Date	Events	Location	Partner
4/22/2013	4/26/2013	USAID sites visit	Mondulkiri	WWF, WCS
5/9/2013	5/10/2013	USAID sites visit	Pursat province	SFB, HARVEST
5/13/2013	5/23/2013	Winrock International Ecosystem Services Team's visit to Cambodia	Mondulkiri	SFB, FA officials,
5/17/2013	5/17/2013	Project Advisory Team meeting	Phnom Penh SFB Project office	SFB, Partners
5/22/2013	5/22/2013	Official Launch of the Supporting Forests and Biodiversity Project	Raffles Hotel Le Royal Phnom Penh	WWF, WCS, EWMI, RECOFTC
5/27/2013	5/27/2013	Stakeholder Forum/Workshop	Kampong Thom	EWMI, RECOFTC
6/19/2013	6/19//2013	Provincial Launch of the Supporting Forests and Biodiversity Project	Kampong Thom	EWMI, RECOFTC
6/21/2013	6/21/2013	Provincial Launch of the Supporting Forests and Biodiversity Project	Mondulkiri	WWF, WCS
5/29/2013		Provincial Reflection Workshop	Mondulkiri	WWF, WCS
6/17-6/19/2013		InVest Training	Mondulkiri	WWF, WCS
6/27/2013	6/27/2013	Internal Gender Training	Mondulkiri	SFB Team and partners
6/29/2013	6/31/2013	SFB team to visit FA in Preah Vihea, Kratie and Stueng Treng to introduce the SFB project	Preah Vihear, Kratie and Stoeung Treng	SFB Team and partners

8. HOW IMPLEMENTING PARTNER HAS ADDRESSED A/COR COMMENTS FROM THE LAST QUARTERLY REPORT

There were no comments or issues to address from the previous quarterly report.

9. ANNEX¹²

Annex I: Next Quarter Performance Work Plan (a table of activities and plan, including status of previous quarter plan)

Annex II: Updated Performance Indicator Report

Annex III: Beneficiary Information (trainees, and livelihood people)

Annex VI: CD of Reference Data, Maps, etc.

Annex V: Snapshots

¹² USAID Comment (May 29, 2013): We would need the following annexes, if possible, otherwise they should be included in the next report. SFB Response: Quarter 3 report included detailed planned activities for the following quarter, activities beneficiary tracking table, and InVEST training report with photos.